

DARE-
DEVIL

15¢
©

73
FEB



DAREDEVIL™

THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!



MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

IRON MAN
CAN'T HELP YOU,
DD--AND
NEITHER CAN
NICK FURY!

YOU'RE
GOING TO
DIE--
NOW!



REVEALED AT LAST!!
THE SINISTER SECRET OF
ZODIAC!

DAREDEVIL, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!™

Behold... ^{The} Brotherhood!

STRAIN, FURY! FEEL THE TWISTED PULL OF **LOYALTIES** TEARING OUT YOUR **GUT!** WHAT DARK FORCE **DRIVES** YOU TO GROPE FOR THE GLOWING **ZODIAC KEY**-- WHAT POWER HOLDS YOU IN ITS **TIGHTENING GRIP?**

ANSWERS-- WHAT ANSWER CAN THERE **BE?** WHAT ANSWER FOR A MAN **DOOMED?**

DON'T **DO IT, FURY!** IF YOU FALL --- WE'RE ALL **FINISHED!**

NOTE FOR COMPLETISTS: BOTH THIS SAGA AND **IRON MAN #35** WERE PLOTTED BY AFFABLE **ALLYN BRODSKY!**
-- STAN.

IF YOU HAVEN'T READ **IRON MAN #35**, AND ARE WONDERING JUST WHAT'S **GOING DOWN--** DIG IT-- OUR VERY OWN **GIFT FLASHBACK--!**

460 Z

STAN LEE EDITOR • **GERRY CONWAY** WRITER • **GENE COLAN** ARTIST • **SYD SHORES** EMBELLISHER • **SAM ROSEN** LETTERER



WATCH HIM-- SEE HOW HE **FIGHTS** THE PULL-- THE STRENGTH OF NICK FURY IS INDEED **LEGENDARY**..

BUT IT COMES TO **NAUGHT** AGAINST THE ENERGY OF THE **KEY!**

MY STOMACH'S CHURNING LIKE A **BLASTED VOLCANO**--

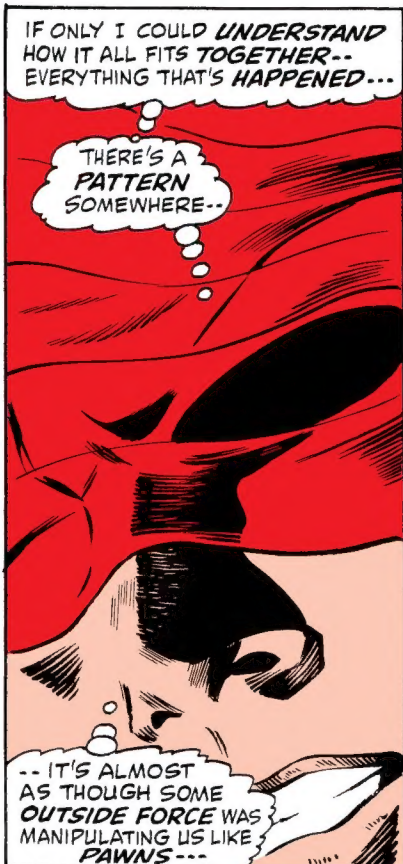
-- FEEL MYSELF **SLIPPIN'**-- LOSIN' **CONTROL**--!

COME ON, **FURY**-- **HANG IN THERE!**



NO WAY, NICK-- I CAN **HEAR** YOUR PULSEBEAT QUICKENING---

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF **MINUTES!**



IF ONLY I COULD **UNDERSTAND** HOW IT ALL FITS **TOGETHER**-- EVERYTHING THAT'S **HAPPENED**--

THERE'S A **PATTERN** SOMEWHERE--

-- IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH SOME **OUTSIDE FORCE** WAS MANIPULATING US LIKE **PAWNS**---



"COULDN'T YOU FEEL IT THIS AFTERNOON AT THE **LINEUP**, DD-- WHEN YOU WERE ONLY **MATT MURDOCK**, ASSISTANT D.A.--?"

CALM **DOWN**, SHELL-HEAD--- YOU'RE LETTING YOUR **TEMPER** PUSH YOU!

IF YOU WEREN'T A **BLIND MAN**, MURDOCK---

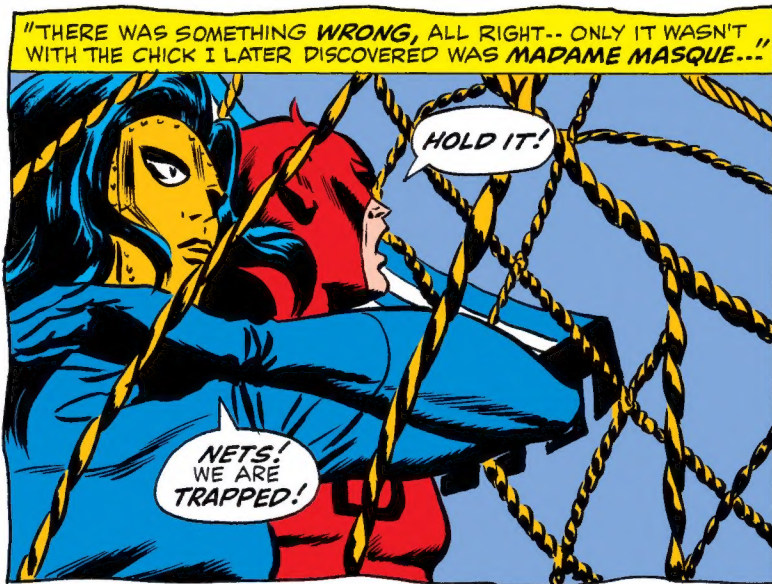
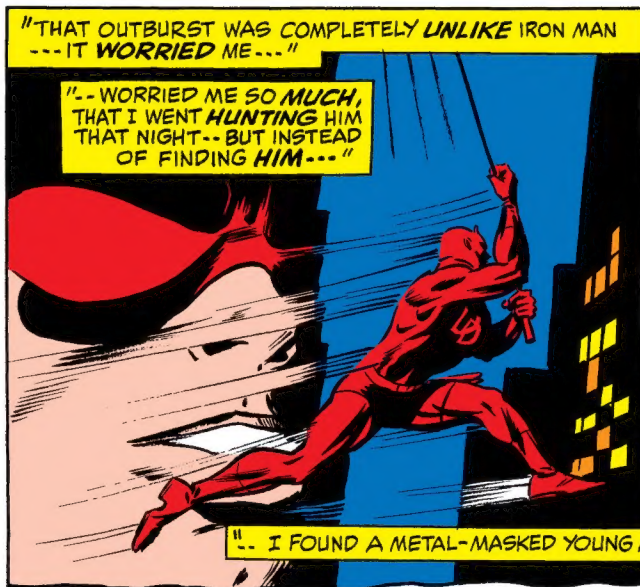


-- I'D SHOW YOU WHAT **ANGER** REALLY IS. JASPER SITWELL IS **DYING** BECAUSE OF **SPYMASTER**--

---AND IF YOU WON'T LET ME **FORCE** HIS WHEREABOUTS OUT OF THESE-- THESE---

FORGET IT, LAWYER MAN!

I'LL **FIND HIM MYSELF!**





THEY CALL ME---**SPYMASTER!**
I HOPE THIS LITTLE-- AH,
ABDUCTION HASN'T **INCON-**
VENIENCED YOU---

BUT I'M AFRAID
YOU'LL HAVE TO
REMAIN OUR **GUESTS**
FOR QUITE A **WHILE!**



SORRY, HANDSOME --
BUT I'VE GOT **OTHER**
PLANS---

--FOR YOU--
AND YOUR
SLIPPERY-
FINGERED
FRIENDS!

THE **NET--**
-- THEY'RE **M**
FREE--AWWK!



THAT WAS
HARDLY THE
MOST **PERCEP-**
TIVE OBSERVATION
EVER **MADE!**

-- BUT AT
LEAST IT WAS
A **PROPOS!**

≡**MMMF!**≡

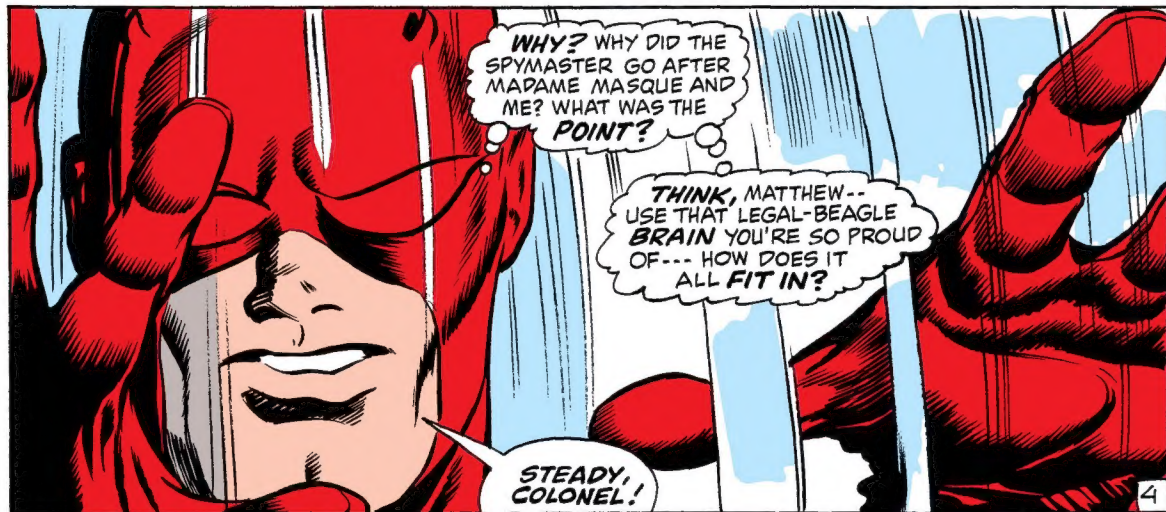
NOW LOOK
AT **THAT---**
HE WALKED
RIGHT INTO
MY **FEET!**



YOU **MOCK**
WELL,
MY **FRIEND!**

-- A **PITY**
IT WILL DO
YOU **NO**
GOOD!

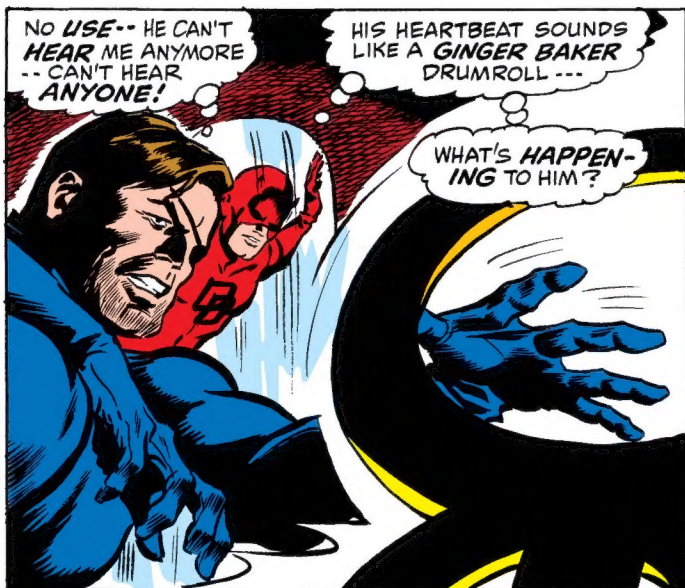
≡**UUUUHH!**≡



WHY? WHY DID THE
SPYMASTER GO AFTER
MADAME MASQUE AND
ME? WHAT WAS THE
POINT?

THINK, MATTHEW--
USE THAT **LEGAL-BEAGLE**
BRAIN YOU'RE SO **PROUD**
OF--- HOW DOES IT
ALL **FIT IN?**

STEADY,
COLONEL!



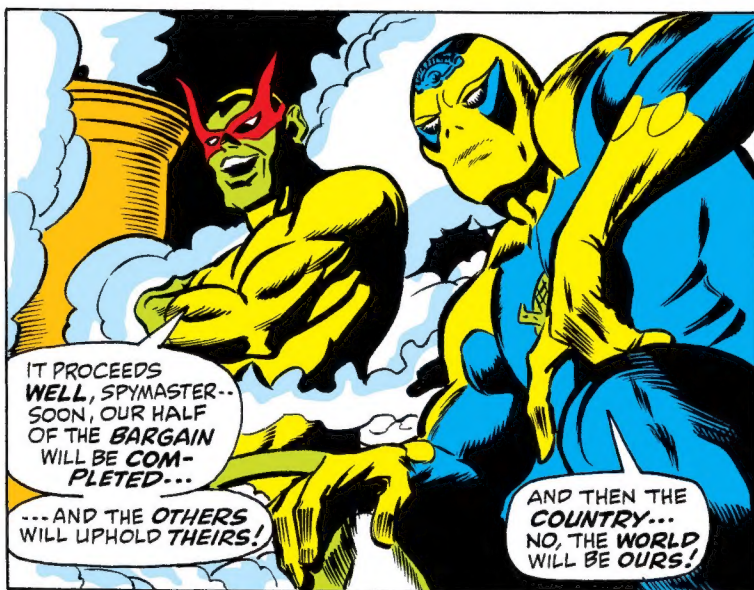
NO *USE*-- HE CAN'T *HEAR* ME ANYMORE -- CAN'T HEAR *ANYONE*!

HIS HEARTBEAT SOUNDS LIKE A *GINGER BAKER* DRUMROLL ---

WHAT'S *HAPPENING* TO HIM?



IT IS *IMPOSSIBLE*--- HOW MUCH LONGER CAN HE *WITHSTAND* THE KEY'S POWER?



IT PROCEEDS *WELL*, SPYMASTER-- SOON, OUR HALF OF THE *BARGAIN* WILL BE *COMPLETED*---

--- AND THE *OTHERS* WILL UPHOLD *THEIRS*!

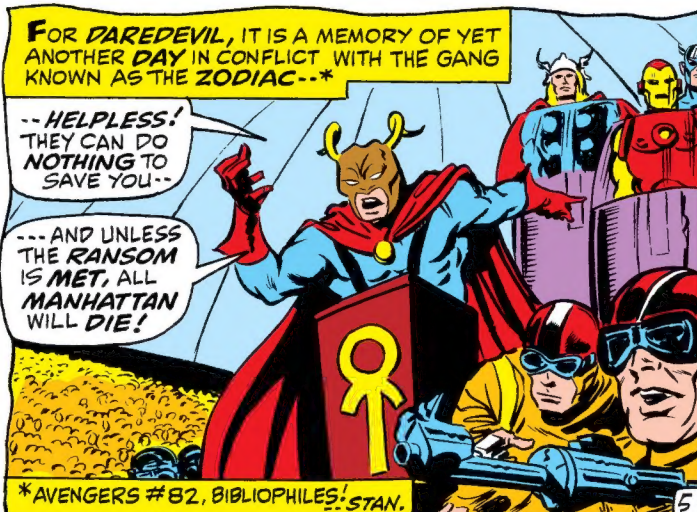
AND THEN THE *COUNTRY*... NO, THE *WORLD* WILL BE *OURS*!



HE'S *BREAKING*--- THIS IS *IT*-- THE *FINAL MOMENT*!



AND WHAT THOUGHTS *RACE* THROUGH A MAN'S MIND AT THAT MEETING WITH *DESTINY*? WHAT *MEMORIES*-- WHAT FORMER *TRIUMPHS* AND *FAILURES*?

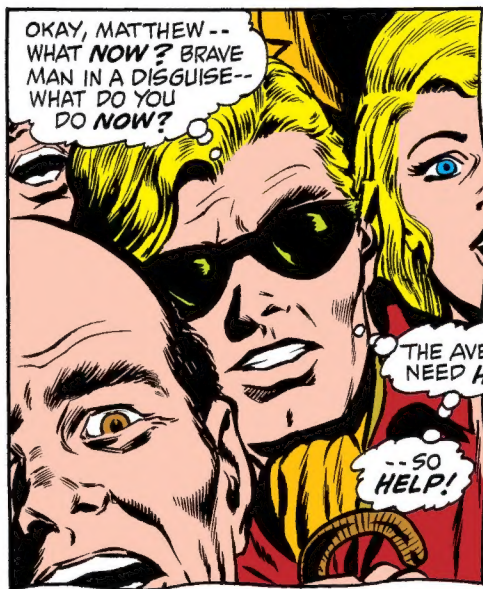


FOR *DAREDEVIL*, IT IS A MEMORY OF YET ANOTHER *DAY* IN CONFLICT WITH THE GANG KNOWN AS THE *ZODIAC*--*

-- *HELPLESS*! THEY CAN DO *NOTHING* TO *SAVE* YOU--

--- AND UNLESS THE *RANSOM* IS *MET*, ALL *MANHATTAN* WILL *DIE*!

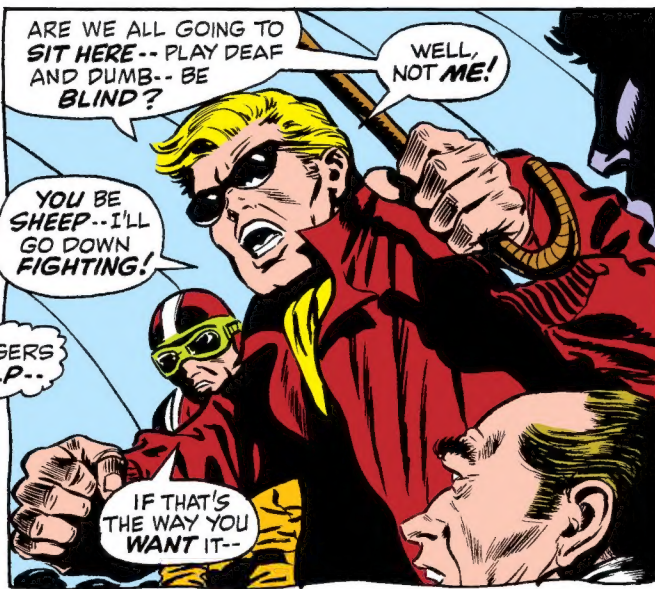
*AVENGERS #82, BIBLIOPHILES! STAN.



OKAY, MATTHEW --
WHAT **NOW**? BRAVE
MAN IN A DISGUISE--
WHAT DO YOU
DO NOW?

THE AVENGERS
NEED **HELP**--

--SO
HELP!



ARE WE ALL GOING TO
SIT HERE-- PLAY DEAF
AND DUMB-- BE
BLIND?

WELL,
NOT **ME!**

YOU BE
SHEEP--I'LL
GO DOWN
FIGHTING!

IF THAT'S
THE WAY YOU
WANT IT--



-- THAT'S THE
WAY IT'LL **BE!**

HE'S **DOWN!**
THAT **CLINCHES**
IT!



THE FOOL-- NOW HE'LL BE
EXECUTED WITH THE OTHERS!

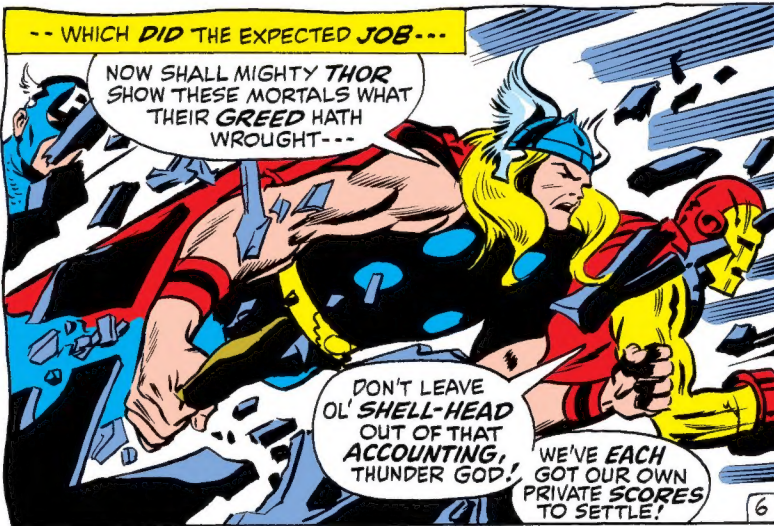
UH-UNH--- JUST
KEEP DRAGGING
ME **CLOSER** TO
THE **PODIUM**--

--AND IF
THAT **HUMMING**
SOUND IS THE
MACHINE I THINK
IT IS---

THERE'S GOING
TO BE A WHOLE
NEW **BALL GAME!**



**GUIDING HIS AIM BY THE
DIRECTION OF THE SOUND,
MATT PUNCHED A HALF-FOOT
LENGTH OF TENSILE-STEEL
WIRE INTO THE MACHINE
IMPRISONING THE AVENGERS--**

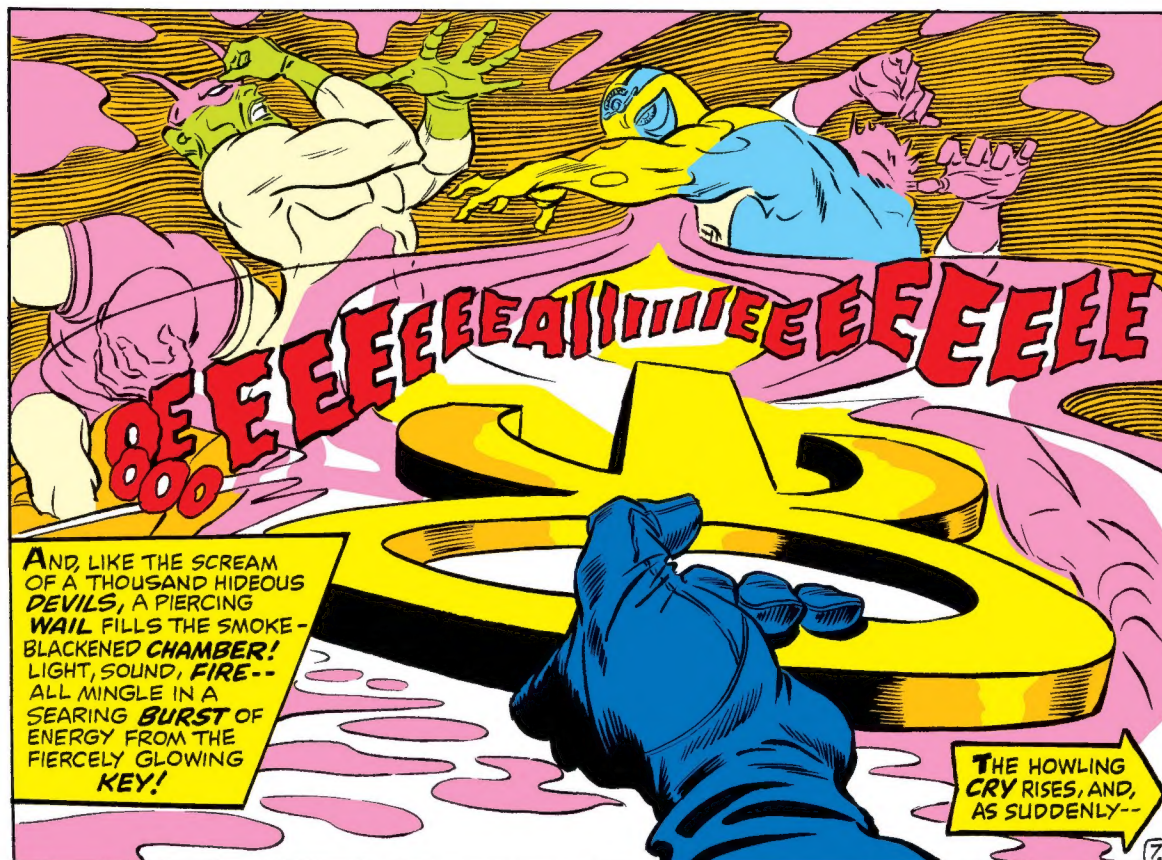


-- WHICH **DID** THE EXPECTED **JOB**--

NOW SHALL MIGHTY **THOR**
SHOW THESE MORTALS WHAT
THEIR **GREED** HATH
WROUGHT---

DON'T LEAVE
OL' **SHELL-HEAD**
OUT OF THAT
ACCOUNTING,
THUNDER GOD!

WE'VE EACH
GOT OUR OWN
PRIVATE SCORES
TO SETTLE!



--DIES!!

FOR ONE **MADDENING MOMENT**,
THE VERY **FABRIC** OF TIME AND
SPACE **FOLDS IN** UPON ITSELF,
CAVING IN WITH A SOUNDLESS
ROAR LIKE THE FOAM OF A MILLION
ROCK-CRAGGED **BEACHES**---

MOUTHS OPEN
LUNGS YEARNING
TO **SCREAM**, FIND-
ING NOT THE AIR TO
FILL THEM, THE
FIVE HEROES **SPIN**
THROUGH A MIASMA
OF WARPED
INFINITY---

...**SPINNING**, FALLING, SINKING
DOWN AND DOWN AND DOWN AN
INVOLUTED **TUNNEL** FOR WHAT
SEEMS AN ETERNITY, UNTIL ALL
ELSE BECOMES BUT A **FADING**
DREAM THAT QUICKLY **PASSES**--
LEAVING NAUGHT BUT THE **FALLING!**

THEN THIS TOO *PASSES*, AND THE TUNNEL OF REALITY QUICKLY *REFOCUSSES*---

-- FINDING THEM IN A CHAMBER BOTH DARK AND DRY, FILLED WITH THE EYE-STINGING *FUMES* OF SPUTTERING *TORCHES*---

IN THE NAME OF THE *BROTHERHOOD*, I BID YOU MOST CORDIAL *WELCOME*!

I AM THE *LAW-HOLDER*-- MOST HIGH PRIEST OF *ANKH*!

YEAH-- AND I'M *SANTA CLAUS* AND THIS IS *DISNEY-LAND*!

AN' COME TO *THINK* OF IT-- MAYBE WE ARE!

NUTS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE, WHISKERS-- MAYBE *YOU'VE* GOT THE ANSWERS!

YOUR WORDS REVEAL A *DISTRAUGHT SOUL*-- AND SUCH IS AS IT *SHOULD* BE!

YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED *MUCH*, AND NOW 'TIS THE TIME FOR AN *EXPLANATION*!

THIS WHICH YOU CALL THE *ZODIAC KEY* IS MORE THAN YOU WOULD *IMAGINE*---

IT IS THE MYSTIC *VALVE* THROUGH WHICH THE POWER OF *ANKH* IS SIPHONED TO ITS *BEARER*!

ANKH, THE WIND-GIVER--- *ANKH* THE SUN-HOLDER--- *ANKH* THE COSMIC *ALL* OF OUR DIMENSION!

"MANY, MANY *CYCLES* AGO, THIS *KEY* WAS FASHIONED FROM THE CARVEN *STONE* OF THE EARTH AND THE SPILLED *BLOOD* OF A *LAMB*---

"...AND THUS, BY ITS **ORIGINS**, IT WAS BOUND INTO THE LIFELOOD OF THE **ALL-CREATOR!**"

FOR MANY YEARS, THE **BROTHERHOOD** HELD SOLE POSSESSION OF THE **KEY**, AND THROUGH ITS **USE** WE STRUCK THE **ETERNAL BALANCE** BETWEEN **ORDER** AND **CHAOS--**"

"FORCES KNOWN TO YOU AS **GOOD** AND **EVIL!**"

"BUT IN THE FOURTH GENERATION OF THE CENTURY OF THE **LEOPARD**, SOMETHING **HAPPENED** TO THE STRENGTH OF THE **KEY**..."

"IT BEGAN TO **WEAKEN**..."

BROTHERS, THE **POWER-FLAMES** GROW **DIM** IN THEIR **BRAZIER**S--- THUS IS SIGNED THE DYING **MIGHT** OF OUR **BROTHERHOOD!**

NEW LIFE AND **BALANCE** MUST BE INSTILLED INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE **KEY!**

IT MUST BE SENT **FROM** OUR WORLD-- WHICH HAS GROWN OLD AND **STAGNANT**-- TO A **NEW WORLD** STILL **STRUGGLING** UNDER THE **ETERNAL BATTLE**--!

WE SHALL SEND IT TO-- **EARTH!**

THEN IT WAS **YOU**-- YOU WHAT NEARLY GOT US ALL **KILLED!**

YE **BLOODY DEMON**-- WHAT **RIGHT** 'AVE YE GOT TO DEAL IN THE LIFELOOD OF **MEN**?

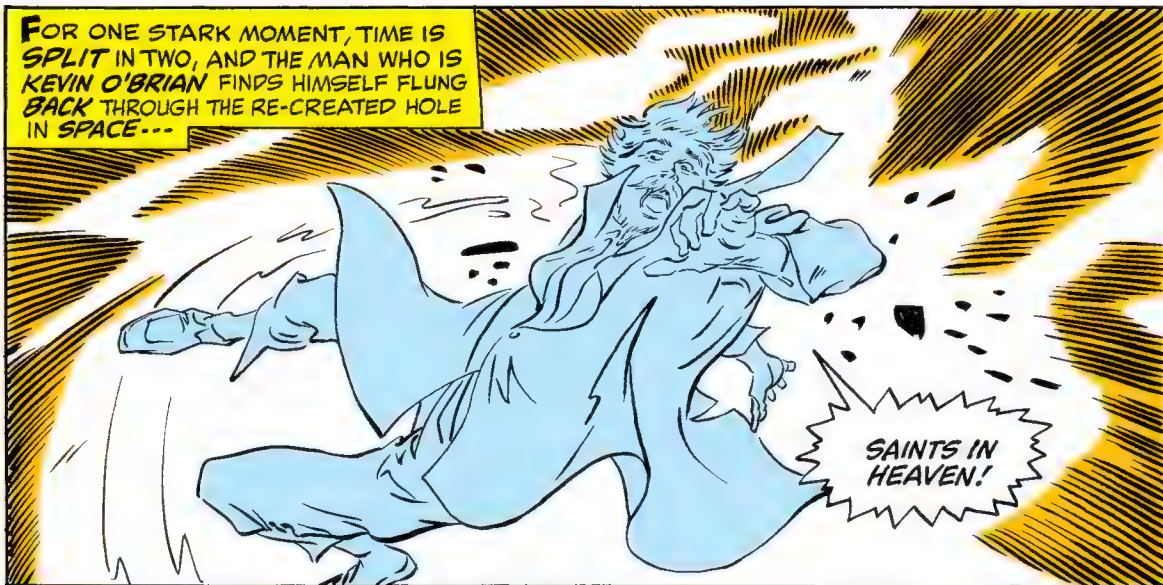
RIGHT? YOU SPEAK OF **RIGHT**?

KNOW THEN THAT ALL **RIGHTS** MUST **PERISH** UNDER THE WILL OF **ANKH**---

FOR 'TIS ONLY THROUGH **HIS WILL** THAT THE **BALANCE**, WHICH PROVIDES YOU WITH YOUR "**RIGHTS**," MAY **EXIST!**

BEGONE, FOOLISH ONE-- AND SPEAK NO MORE OF "**RIGHTS**!"

FOR ONE STARK MOMENT, TIME IS **SPLIT** IN TWO, AND THE MAN WHO IS **KEVIN O'BRIAN** FINDS HIMSELF FLUNG **BACK** THROUGH THE RE-CREATED HOLE IN SPACE---



SAINTS IN HEAVEN!

-- TO THE GENTLE **QUIET** OF HIS HOME-- WHERE ALL THAT WENT BEFORE BEGINS TO TAKE ON THE QUALITY OF A **DREAM**---



STEADY, LAD!

WIT'ANY **LUCK**-- IT'LL ALL BE NOTHIN' BUT A **HEADACHE** IN THE **MORNIN'**!

MAYBE FOR YOU, KEVIN! BUT, FOR OUR HEROES, IT'S STILL ALL TOO **REAL**!

OKAY, **LAWHOLDER**, YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT! THE KEY'S MORE THAN JUST A **CRACKER-JACKS** PRIZE-- BUT WE **KNEW** THAT!



YOU MUST HAVE HAD A **REASON** FOR BRINGING ALL OF US HERE--!

THAT WE **DID**! WE NEED A **REAFFIRMATION** OF THE **BALANCE**-- TOO LONG, OUR WORLD HAS BEEN **CALM** AND **STILL**---

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN **ORDER** AND **CHAOS** HAS FOUND ITS LEVEL-- AND THE KEY'S **POWER DIES**!

I PROPOSE---



--A **NEW** STRUGGLE--

--BETWEEN YOU---

--AND YOUR **FOES**!





IN THIS
WAY THE KEY
WILL **REGAIN**
ITS FORMER
MAJESTY!

THERE
SHALL BE
A **REWARD**
FOR THE
WINNERS--



--- A PLACE AMONG THE
MOST **HIGH** OF THE
BROTHERHOOD!

THAT'S LIKE
MAKING A FREE TICKET
TO **BELLEVUE** FIRST
PRIZE IN A **DANCE**
CONTEST!

NO, **THANKS**,
FRIEND. WE'LL
JUST TAKE OUR
PETTY **QUARRELS**
ELSEWHERE!

I'M AFRAID THAT
IS QUITE **IMPOSSIBLE**,
MASKED ONE---

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THOUGH MAYHAP YOU
MUST BE **FORCED**--
YOU WILL **FIGHT!**

BY THE
POWER OF
THE **KEY**--

-- AND IN THE
NAME OF THE
BROTHERHOOD--

-- YOU WILL
FIGHT!

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CAPRICORN!

IT APPEARS WE ARE DESTINED TO BATTLE, EH, DAREDEVIL? THEN PERHAPS WE SHOULD MAKE THE **BEST** OF THE SITUATION?



I'M NOT A **PAWN**-- YOU CAN'T MAKE ME FIGHT AGAINST MY **WILL**!



SO YOU WOULD BELIEVE, HORNED ONE! KNOW THAT ANKH'S WILL IS **ALL**---

--AND THAT IT IS THE WILL OF ANKH THAT YOU NOW **BEGIN**!



GOING TO BEG OFF, HERO-MAN? THAT'D BE JUST ABOUT YOUR **SPEED**!

NO CHANCE, SPYMASTER! THERE'S A LITTLE MATTER OF A DYING FRIEND WE HAVE TO SETTLE!

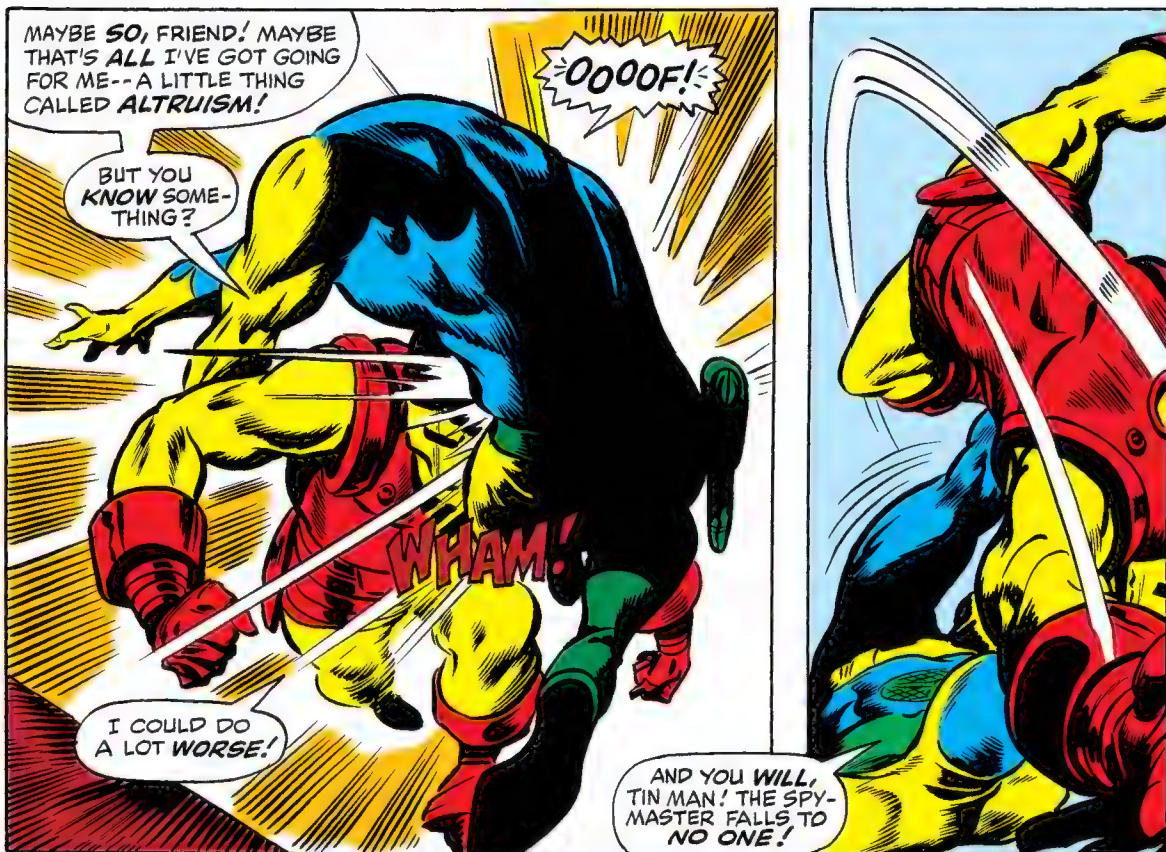


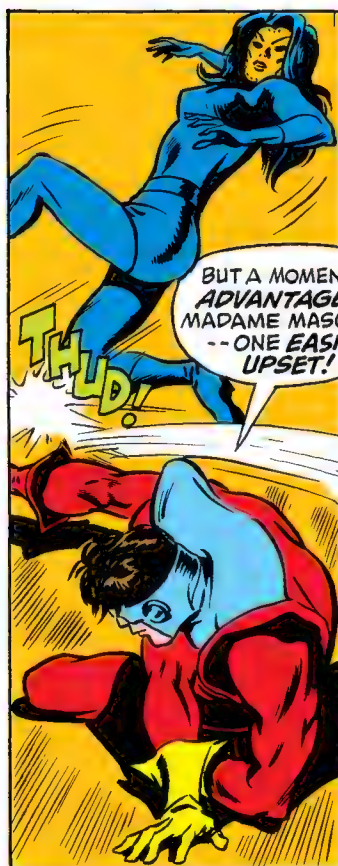
A MAN NAMED **SITWELL**-- WHO'S A **BETTER** MAN THAN EITHER OF US---

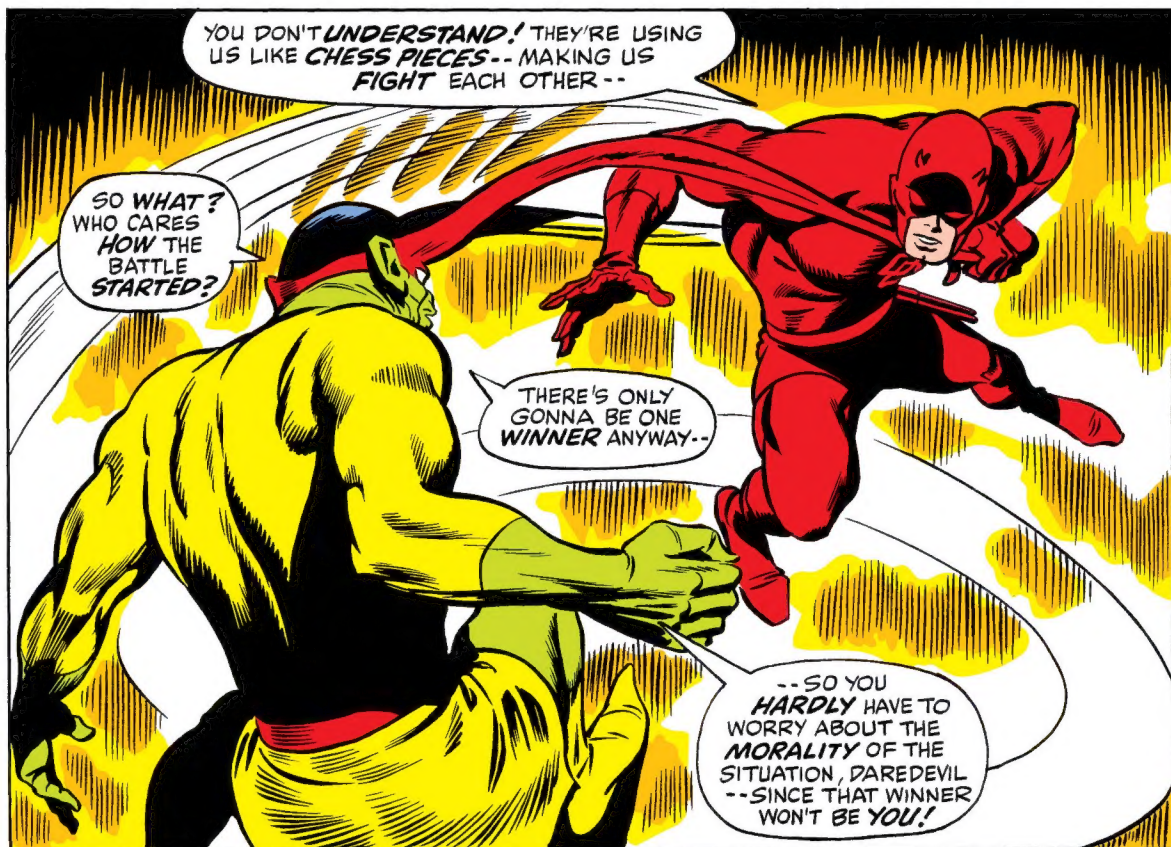
-- AND WHO MIGHT NOW BE GOING **SIX FEET UNDER** BECAUSE OF YOU! SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT **MOTIVATION**--

-- I'VE GOT ALL I NEED!

IDEALISTIC FOOL!

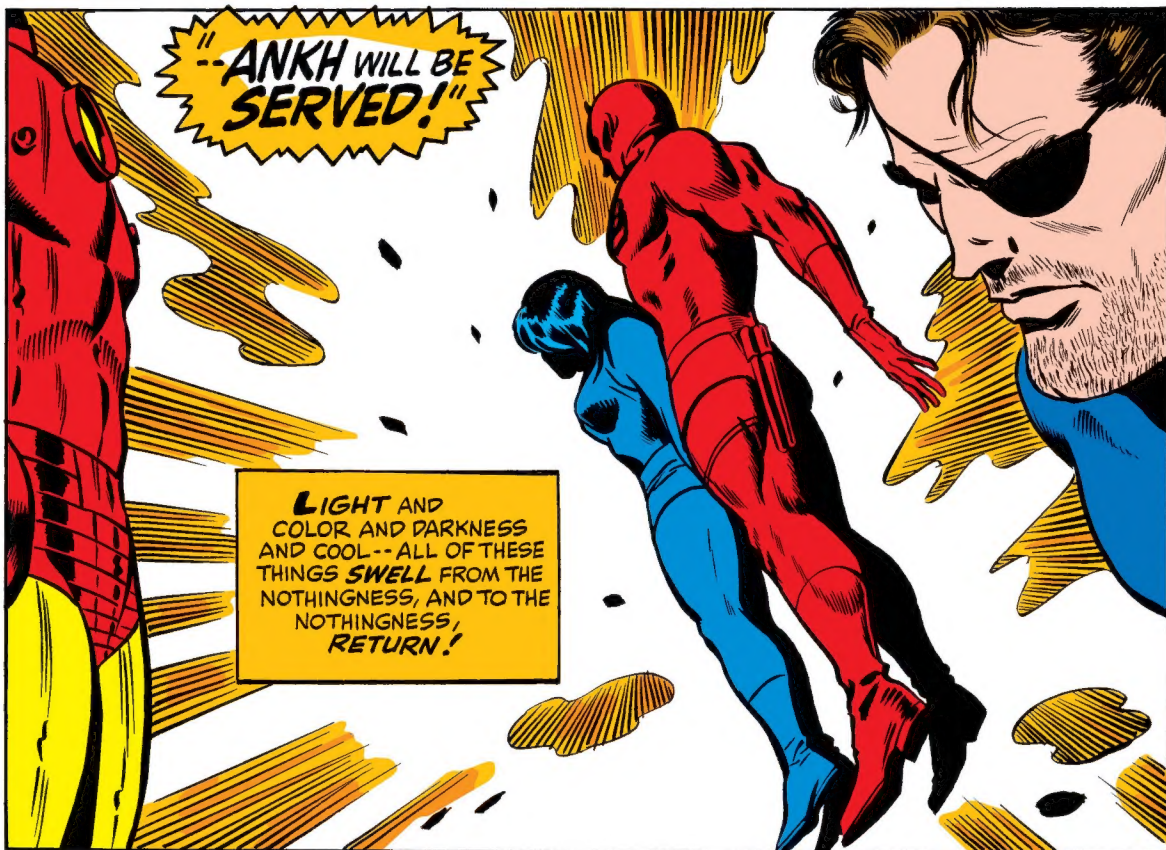






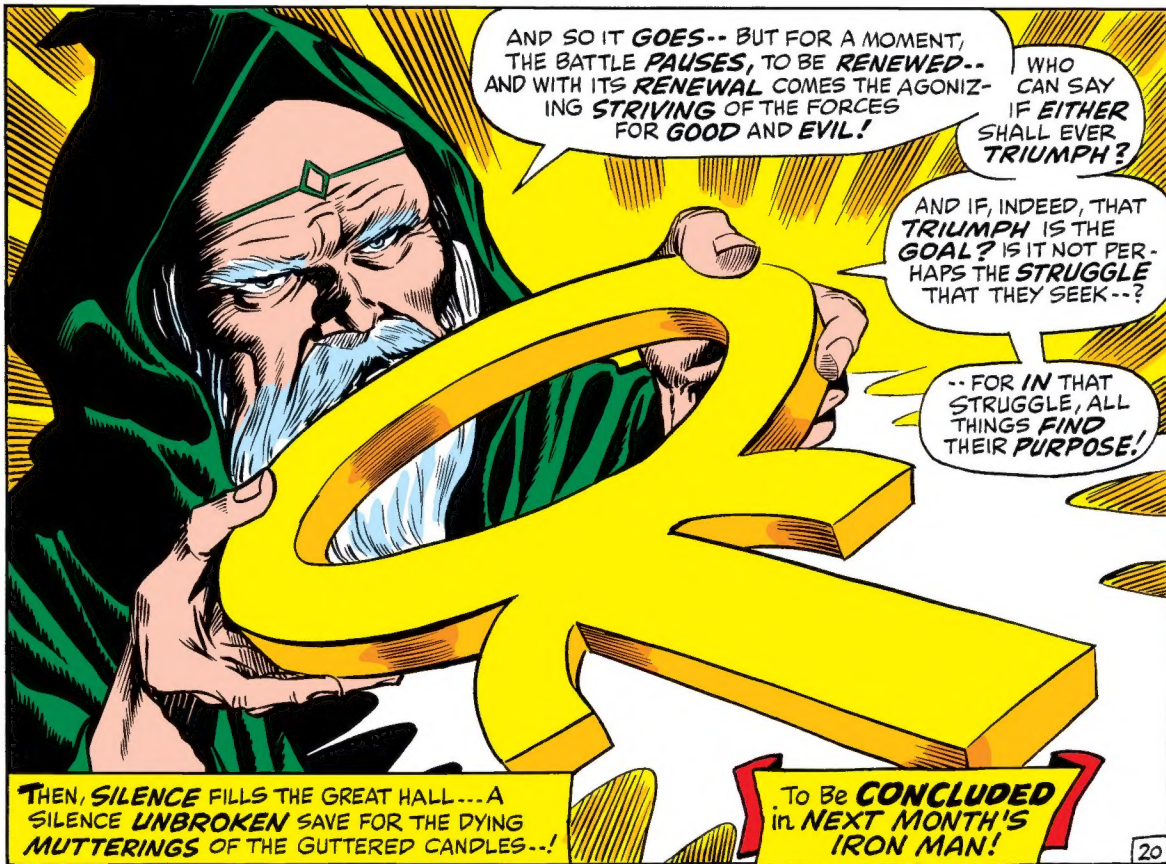






--ANKH WILL BE SERVED!--

LIGHT AND COLOR AND DARKNESS AND COOL-- ALL OF THESE THINGS SWELL FROM THE NOTHINGNESS, AND TO THE NOTHINGNESS, RETURN!



AND SO IT GOES-- BUT FOR A MOMENT, THE BATTLE PAUSES, TO BE RENEWED-- AND WITH ITS RENEWAL COMES THE AGONIZING STRIVING OF THE FORCES FOR GOOD AND EVIL!

WHO CAN SAY IF EITHER SHALL EVER TRIUMPH?

AND IF, INDEED, THAT TRIUMPH IS THE GOAL? IS IT NOT PERHAPS THE STRUGGLE THAT THEY SEEK--?

-- FOR IN THAT STRUGGLE, ALL THINGS FIND THEIR PURPOSE!

THEN, SILENCE FILLS THE GREAT HALL... A SILENCE UNBROKEN SAVE FOR THE DYING MUTTERINGS OF THE GUTTERED CANDLES--!

To Be CONCLUDED in NEXT MONTH'S IRON MAN!